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Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum

A REVIEW AND APPRECIATION

By

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CORPUS SCHWENCKFELDIANORUM.*

The appearance of the first volume of the *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* is an event of more than passing interest. This is the great work on which Dr. Chester D. Hartranft, Honorary President of Hartford Seminary, has been engaged for a number of years. The material has been in process of collection and arrangement for about twenty years and a large part of it is nearly ready for publication, so that we may confidently hope that the remaining sixteen volumes of this magnificent undertaking will appear at intervals of a few months. To understand the importance of this work which is sure to modify to a considerable degree the common view of the Reformation, it is necessary first to know something about Caspar Schwenckfeld. Many points in his life hitherto obscure have been made clear in the course of the investigations. It is probable that one volume of the work will be devoted to the story of his life. In the introductory chapter Doctor Hartranft gives a short sketch of Schwenckfeld as follows:

"We must maintain the year of his birth to have been 1490 and not 1489. His family was of the most ancient nobility, reaching back in all probability to the beginning of the German colonization in Silesia and the Mongolian conflicts. After preliminary studies he frequented various universities, pursuing the liberal arts course and certain studies in both kinds of law and, at a somewhat later date, theology also. Although he would naturally have the experience of a soldier, he adopted the civil life and served at the courts of Carl I of Münsterberg-Oels, and then of Georg I of Brieg, and finally of Friedrich II of Liegnitz. In 1518

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Schwenckfeld was spiritually awakened. It was a profound and lasting change after a most serious struggle with himself. The conversion bore immediate fruit in a burning zeal for the propagation of the Gospel, because there had been not only a revolution in his own nature but a revolt against the system of tradition and externality as centred in Rome. These two spiritual incidents were closely related. For him henceforth the Scriptures alone were the sufficient authority both for his own education and for the reconstruction of the Church. That his zeal might be according to knowledge he addressed himself to the study of the sacred records as well as to the Greek language, and later to the Hebrew. He also had a wide reading in patrology and scholasticism together with all the new literature. The death of his father constrained him to look after his estates. An affection of his hearing, and most of all the serious view of life which the Reformation had instigated in him, led him to withdraw formally from the court, that he might give himself more exclusively to the pursuit and dissemination of the truth he now loved. The clerical life compelled him to consider its claim, but he decided that he could serve the movement better as a layman, and such he remained. He entered upon the evangelical service with apostolic fervor in all phases of activity, in speech, in preaching, in correspondence, in touring and conference. This is one of the emphatic stages of his life that shall receive a befitting elaboration. His chief themes were Christ as the sufficient Saviour, the All in All, the office of the Holy Spirit, the supreme authority of the Scriptures, individualism, education and the successive points which are designated a few pages below. He became a man of immense and foremost influence in the Reformation of Silesia. He had wanted Hess to be the leader, but unconsciously became such himself, because he sought only the glory of his Master and was serving no personal ambition. In no sense can he be spoken of as an autodidact, for all his preliminary studies were in universities and his later ones under the direction of most competent scholars, involving also a revisit to Wittenberg that he might attend the lectures of Luther and Melanchthon, and possibly others. That he built upon these studies privately is true but not reprehensible nor narrowing. He must be considered one of the broadest and most far-sighted

men of his time. It must be remarked that Schwenckfeld did his own thinking and acknowledged no man as his master. With the highest regard for all who had opened up the paths of righteousness and fraternity, and eminently for Luther, he did not submerge himself under the influence of the most weighty personages of his day; the signs of his independence manifested themselves at once. Schwenckfeld conceived the plan of a diocesan reform. He suggested the separation of the bishopric of Breslau from Rome, and its remodeling through the Scriptures alone. By this he hoped that the regeneration of the Silesian Church might be quietly effected. The proposal, however, failed to win the approbation of Jacob von Salza, the then incumbent. Upon the failure of this project he desired the reformation of the Herzogtum of Liegnitz with Brieg, Wohlau and Luben, for which the State guaranteed free play. The innovations were to be on the basis of the Scriptures and wholly by Scriptural methods. This was a complete success; the scheme of religious liberty was also adopted by the Herzogtum of Prussia when that State was organized. These few facts among a hundred others are sufficient to overthrow a criticism which denies him a sense of organization or for religious institution and worship on any large scale. A statesman of twelve years of official life without a sense for the statutable and institutional indeed!

"When the Lord's table, that should have been the symbol of closest fellowship, began to be a subject of controversy, Schwenckfeld struck out his own path. He approached the current doctrines of transubstantiation, impanation, and consubstantiation from the question whether Judas could have actually eaten the body and drunk the blood of his Lord. That was enough to demonstrate to him the vulnerability of these realistic, Capernaitic interpretations. This and not personal revelations nor the exposition of the sacramental phrases was the true starting point of his explanation of the institution as setting forth a spiritual and a memorial participation in Christ. It must be remembered that Luther had hardly reached any constructive finality, his own system was not as yet completely formed; a great deal of it was traditional; nor was it much better with Melanchthon's *loci communes*. Schwenckfeld has as much right to be considered

original in the points of agreement in the faith as had any other of the leaders. He did not accept these as tradition or because ecumenical councils had defined them; he thought them out for himself and tried to live by them experimentally. He is entitled to just as much recognition for his support of these conclusions of the Christian faith as was Luther or Melanchthon or Zwingli or Calvin, and he defended them as vigorously as they. This is one of the ways in which the orthodox and the state-churchmen have allowed themselves to underestimate him by bringing him under the shadow of their own narrow and arbitrary standards. As the conflict widened the Liegnitzers proposed a Stillstand until such time as an agreement might be reached by a legitimate convocation of all the advocates of the Reformation. This was a wise anticipation of the Marburg colloquy in 1529; and yet a deal more significant, because the independence of the Church was guarded; the State was to have nothing to do with it. Moreover, every shade of opinion was to have an equal right of representation and discussion. The unnatural and rancorous divisions of the evangelical parties might have been avoided by the adoption of this policy, for it would have compelled mutuality and the practice of religious liberty. But all the invited rejected it, preachers and magistrates alike, and so they made the cleavage permanent and the union of Church and State was ratified; the exigencies of politics henceforth determined the course of the new faith, external and internal. From the elaboration of the doctrine of the sacraments Schwenckfeld advanced to the tenet of the real course of the Word of God. Meanwhile, Ferdinand the Hapsburger had attained the sovereignty over Silesia. The land foolishly cast itself into the ogre's arms. All shades of belief soon had cause to deplore the national folly, for the era of intolerance and violence set up its calendar. Oecolampadius had published Schwenckfeld's book on the "Course of the Word of God," and Zwingli had issued another treatise of the Silesian which explained the Lord's Supper. Through the treacherous bishop of Vienna, Johann Faber, Ferdinand's attention was drawn to the author; the royal disapprobation was conveyed to Friedrich, upon which Schwenckfeld wrote the noble apology that Capito afterwards printed at Strassburg. Recognizing his

prince's difficulty, Schwenkfeld withdrew into voluntary exile. but furnished with a letter of safe conduct. This was early in 1529. The Herzog eventually, and particularly under the persuasion of the Markgraf Georg of Brandenburg, felt that he could not maintain his political independence if he did not join himself to the Lutheran combination. Those of his subjects who continued to support the Middle Way, and their number was incredible, remained in their freedom for many years under the quiet toleration of this prince. The enthusiastic councilor of Albrecht, Friedrich von Heydeck, vigorously colonized the faith in Prussia with the approbation of Herzog Albrecht and Bishop Georg von Polenz.

" Schwenckfeld found his home in the imperial cities. He first settled in Strassburg. It is not our purpose to follow all the external incidents of his career in South Germany; there were but few cities that he did not visit in fulfillment of his mission as a lay evangelist. Augsburg and Ulm were also favorite centers. The intolerance of men like Bucer, Brenz, Blarer, Frecht hounded at his heels everywhere. The bayings of Luther and Melanchthon, although remote, were not lacking, but often sounded out warningly and ominously in the stillness. He had frequently to seek quiet in the manor houses of friendly nobles, great numbers of whom espoused his cause, and when the stress of pursuit became too severe, he took refuge in the solitude of caves. The colloquy at Tübingen in 1535 failed to bring an enduring peace, nor was the agreement with Frecht at Ulm of any permanence. So long as the Lutheran and the Reformed clergy refused to recognize religious liberty, there could be no hope of abiding tranquillity. The main points in the dispute were: religious liberty, the doctrine of the Word, the sacraments, the function of the means of grace, the natural sonship of Christ, the wholeness of Christ, the development of Christ's humanity and kindred christological subjects. Schwenckfeld's activity was augmented rather than diminished by exile. He now resorted to the press and rapidly issued treatise after treatise in spite of all prohibitions. The manuscripts of his works were copied and recopied and circulated far and wide. He discussed such topics as the education of the conscience and the essence of a practical Chris-

tian life. He issued devotional literature of his own and edited devotional classics. He wrote commentaries on parts of the Scriptures and a considerable portion of a postil. He also penned many apologetic works in defense of his vocation or of elements in his teaching. He prepared a number of catechetical works on various subjects. He enlarged upon the doctrine of the states of Christ, his wholeness or the one undivided Christ, his glorification; and again defended these tenets against the attacks of the Creaturists, the ubiquitarians and the antitrinitarians. He was equally strenuous in opposing some extreme principles of the Anabaptistic schools. The amount of personal abuse heaped upon him is incredible and descends to the lowest levels of scurrility. He treated his antagonists with rare grace and courtesy; one only kindled his ire beyond the bounds of gentleness; but the indignation was righteous and well deserved. A critic has regarded this reserve of Christian temper as artificial; if that be the case then Schwenckfeld's conduct savored of insincerity and affectation. Doubtless it did require no little grace to repress his tense powers of indignation and his natural sensitiveness. It was indeed high art to be calm under the abusive enormities of the theologians. As a nobleman trained in the Silesian school of honor these injuries might have been otherwise settled; it did require some constrained skill to handle quietly such vituperative scolds; that he did it with admirable dignity, his critics must confess. Any gentleman will understand a certain difficulty of silence in such moments of unpleasantness. He also conducted an enormous correspondence; except in very rare cases his letters were in response to requests. Princes and princesses, nobles and ladies, statesmen, Protestants and Papists, abbots and abbesses, theologians, bishops and priests, men of all learned professions, bürgermeisters and patricians, bookkeepers, colporteurs, mechanics, merchants, indeed, persons in all ranks of life, were among his clientelage. His works of benevolence were as rich as his own nature. Brotherhoods for support and education in the Christian life spontaneously sprang up. The multitude of his adherents loved him with a singular affection, and his ministry became essentially a personal one. He was not privileged to revisit his native land or to sit once more by his own hearth. His end was one of proud

serenity in the house of his friends at Ulm, December 10, 1561. It will be observed that we have not touched upon the imprecations with which his adversaries sought to destroy his wonderful and inexhaustible influence. The ostracism initiated at Schwabach in 1540, the anathemas proclaimed at Naumburgin, 1554, the edicts of Herzog Christoph in 1554 and 1558 were alike powerless to quench his fidelity or diminish the loyalty of his friends. Not even the terrible and shameless malediction with which Luther dismissed the messenger that brought him the Great Confession shook his resolve or disturbed the circle of his admirers. We cannot here consider the attitude of his individual antagonists such as Brenz, Vadian, Bucer, Wittich, Flacius, Radecker, Staphylus, Coccius, Musaeus, Bullinger, Calvin, and others. It may be remarked, however, that their testimony, save in one instance, is practically unanimous to the beauty and sincerity of his Christian life, however puzzling it was to some of them for such an outrageous heretic to be really good."

Turning now to a consideration of the volume just issued, we find first the advertisement, which is a statement from the Board of Publication of the Schwenckfelder Church explaining how the Corpus came to be published. From this we learn that the first impulse toward collection and publication came from a circular letter sent out by Dr. Hartranft in August, 1884, addressed to the members of the Schwenckfeld Communion, urging the desirability of publishing a "Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum." Some of the reasons given for such an undertaking were that Schwenckfeld had penetrated farther into the spirit of religious liberty than any other leader of the Reformation, and that he had asserted the principles of liberty with faithfulness and courage. It was urged that the whole body of Schwenckfeldian literature from the Reformation to the present time be published. This letter was followed by the notable address given by Dr. Hartranft in September, 1884, at the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the landing of the Schwenckfelders in Pennsylvania. A committee was appointed which entrusted to Dr. Hartranft the work of investigation and publication, a duty to which he has applied himself with rare devotion and success from that time to this.

The advertisement is followed by an Introduction to the entire series written by Dr. Hartranft, in which he mentions the editions of Schwenckfeld's works and gives a short account of his life, followed by some of his more important ideas and achievements as a reformer under the following heads:

1. He adopted and consistently held to individualism.

2. He stood for the fundamental rights of the laity, accepting and maintaining the doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers.

3. He held practically and theoretically to Christian liberty, as a necessary induction from individual responsibility.

4. Schwenckfeld did excellent service for the broad conception of the idea of humanity which in the Christian system is set forth by its basic fact of brotherhood.

5. He advocated the right of religious assemblies open or private, and entirely distinct from any authorized organization, holding that every believer had the inalienable right of combining with another for religious meditation, exercises, conferences, prayer and study.

6. He is representative of the apothegm that the spirit is above the letter.

7. He zealously defended the proposition that character is above everything else in human life, a position which was fatal to the assumption of the clergy that they were the sole efficient instruments of grace, no matter what their conduct might be.

8. Schwenckfeld was an earnest contender for unity but not necessarily of any formal kind, certainly not for that which is born of compulsory uniformity, but rather the unity which is based on a recognition of individual liberty.

9. He placed signal emphasis upon the education of the conscience.

10. He believed that in the construction of a Christian system of thought, speculative philosophy, whatever its value by itself considered, could have no part. His presentation of Christian ideas is purely biblical, being founded on the Scriptures, positive experience and the inner illumination of the spirit.

11. He applied the Gospel practically for the elevation of

his dependents on his estates. He endeavored to socialize the gospel after a rational Christian standard.

Dr. Hartranft next mentions by way of illustration two points in the dogmatic system of Schwenckfeld to show how they agreed with his whole theory of life. These are, first, his theory of the Lord's Supper according to which the supper was the occasion for the ascent of the soul, the elements remaining a memorial of the fact that Christ was the life of the world. The second point is his remarkable contribution to christology. He held that the humanity of Christ though distinctly human was not a creature. Other matters considered in this introduction are Schwenckfeld's influence upon the German language, his relation to the Reformation, and the widespread misunderstanding of what he really accomplished. A short bibliography follows the introduction, after which comes the main body of the book, in which seven documents are considered.

These are some of his earliest extant letters, three of them being addressed to Johann Hess, the fourth to a friend on the point of losing his faith, the fifth an address to the Sisters of the Convent at Naumburg am Queis, the sixth, a Missive and Reminder to the Sisters in the Cloister at Naumburg am Queis, and the seventh, the most important and illuminating of them all, an open letter to Jacob von Salza, bishop of Breslau. This last is written in collaboration with Hans Magnus von Langenwaldau.

The method of treatment adopted by the editor is to consider first the Bibliography of each document, including questions about manuscripts and printed matter. The text follows this and is a facsimile of the early printed page. After this comes the translation, which is sufficiently free to make it intelligible to modern readers. This is followed by a study of the language of the document, rather for the guidance of the philologian than an exhaustive treatment. Each German document also has a complete vocabulary. This unusually full consideration of the language of the documents is given because Schwenckfeld was, next to Luther, the most important master and former of German style. No books except Luther's were read with so much avidity. Although Schwenckfeld's works were prohibited, they were published in great numbers and his manuscripts were multiplied. He was

probably unsurpassed by any writer of his day in choice style, rich vocabulary, and smooth grammatical construction. He was a master of German and very significant in building up the German speech. To quote Dr. Hartranft:

"It is with reluctance that one assaults a hoary superstition and one to which so much defensive labor has been applied; but a full study of the Reformation literature with its antecedents will constrain a scientifically disposed mind to conclude that Luther is not the solitary and exclusive founder of the High German speech or anything approximating that conspicuous dignity. Many of his contemporaries wrote equally as well as he did, if not always with his popular genius and capacity for turning slang into golden speech, nevertheless with as good a grammar, as large a vocabulary, and as flowing an eloquence."

Then there follows a division relating to the history of the events contained in the document. This is sure to be of great value, because of Dr. Hartranft's intimate and profound knowledge of the history of this period. While the events referred to in the document itself are made the bases of the historical treatment, there are allusions when needed to the wider movements of the time. Frequent use is made of contemporary literature, especially of sermons which show not only how rich the literature was at this time but also how completely Dr. Hartranft has mastered it. This contribution to the history of the period would repay many times over all the money and labor expended on the work; and it is especially valuable because we now have this first brought to our attention in English. The final and crowning division is Dr. Hartranft's study of the theology of the documents, which includes much more than is generally understood by the term. Dr. Hartranft expresses his purpose, which has been well carried out, in these words: "As with Schwenckfeld theology was nothing without life, since he endeavored to make his entire reflections on themes of divine or human thought and conduct vital and as the ordained features of a truly Christian evangelical experience, so our desire is to make the elaboration of his meditations also as stirring as possible. It is not therefore the exclusively technical ethics and theology which we consider, but far rather practical theology and religion. The value of existing conditions, the

promptings of the spirit which animated every feature of the inward and outward change, the motives actuating the various confessional groups, the principles and actions as well of the individual leaders, the religious and moral life in motion in the field and at work in the sowing and ripening and harvesting of souls is what we would like to present. We desire to have the pages glow with the myriad lights that played and helped to produce the letters that we consider. It is the combination of elements that were at work in the mind of this great reformer that we aim to reflect."

In the theological treatment of this reformer, Dr. Hartranft enters upon a subject in which he is at his best, and it is at once evident that he is in closest sympathy with the views of the great Silesian reformer. There is not a dry line in the entire treatment. The theological views of Schwenckfeld are fully given and explained; this is sure to be the most important part of the work.

Space does not permit a review of the content and treatment of these seven documents which are brought before us in this first volume. But at least a brief notice ought to be taken of document number seven, by far the longest and most important, nearly two-thirds of the book being given to this letter and its treatment. This is an open letter to Jacob von Salza, bishop of Breslau, written by Schwenckfeld and Hans Magnus and sent January 1, 1524.

It is a writing of wonderful beauty and power, revealing to us some of the reasons why the Silesian reformer was able to gain and keep such a strong hold upon his followers. In the introductory sentences he reminds his old friend the bishop that love is the universal Christian principle and that a bishop ought to be its chief exponent inwardly and in every outward relation. Hence he cannot but treat their fraternal plea with reciprocal affection. It is the duty of the bishop as the shepherd to feed himself and his flock on the word of God as the only food for the soul and to set up this word as the chief authority in spite of all opposition. Then the writers defend themselves by explaining their own principles and practices, and reply to their critics. They make an appeal for the application of the word of God to

some existing abuses regardless of the hostility of any advocates of traditional privileges. They close the letter by appealing to the bishop to make a personal return to the Lord and to a consideration of the exclusively spiritual nature of His kingdom.

Much the larger part of this volume is taken up with the editor's explanations and expositions. It is probable that a larger place relatively will be occupied by the text in the subsequent volumes of the series. The successive generations of students who count it a precious heritage that they were brought in contact with Dr. Hartranft will rejoice in this opportunity to listen to his words again. The volume throughout is marked by the same lofty and magnificent as well as thorough treatment of the subject which characterized his work in history and theology in the classroom. The thought and language never descend to the commonplace, but are always distinguished by his own peculiar force and virility. Because this is Dr. Hartranft's work it will appeal to many men not especially interested in Reformation history. It answers in the affirmative the question which sometimes came to the minds of his students, whether his seemingly impossible ideas of historical and theological study could be carried out. This work is a demonstration of the value and practical nature of his methods.

While the direction and much of the detailed labor has been his, it should be remembered that he has been remarkably fortunate in having for a number of years two men of marked ability to share with him the burden and joy of the undertaking. Professor O. B. Schlutter has unstintingly given Dr. Hartranft of his profound and accurate linguistic knowledge, and Rev. E. E. S. Johnson is abundantly fulfilling the expectation of those who knew the quality of his historical work while he was a student in the Seminary. Without the scholarly and enthusiastic assistance of these two men the first volume would not be before us at this time, nor would the later numbers be so far on their way to completion.

The appearance of such a work as this in the English language and as the result of the labors of American scholars is a reason for profound gratitude. It is not only a notable event, but in several respects it is unique in American history. There is no

other instance of a religious body showing in this way their devotion to the founder of their church. The spirit of the founder seems to animate the Schwenckfelders living in this country today, the descendants of those who came here as a result of persecution in the eighteenth century. The American body comprises only about two hundred and fifty families, but in a remarkable way they have shown their loyalty to their leader by giving thousands of dollars with unparalleled liberality that his life and work might be presented to the world. It is safe to say that there is no other religious body in America which has ever shown so clear a perception of the value of historical research and publication. Other friends of Dr. Hartranft associated with the Seminary, because of their confidence in him and their interest in historical work, have given freely. Judging from this first volume these liberal givers will never have any reason for regretting the use they have made of their money, for it has been wisely spent. It may be hoped that this will be an incentive to other similar enterprises. And why not? In these days of abundant wealth money is freely spent for almost everything. Why should not thousands be spent just as freely on a great historical work which shall be a permanent addition to our knowledge of a great movement? There are no Carnegie Institutes to furnish money for theological investigations and to bring to us new light on the development of the Kingdom. Such investigations require time and money and are just as truly an opportunity to get good returns as investments in libraries or institutions of research. What a fine challenge the Schwenckfelders have issued to the Baptists that they make an equally thorough investigation of the work of such leaders as Hübmaier and Denck in their noble strugggle for religious liberty!

This book of Dr. Hartranft's is also notable because it is his first publication of any considerable size, though he has been known for more than a quarter of a century as one of our leading theologians. It is the result of the labors of a man who has worked with colossal energy. For more than twenty years his attention has been given to this undertaking whenever there was the opportunity, and for several years it has received his undivided attention. This involved repeated visits to Europe in his Seminary

vacations, and the searching of every library where there was any possibility of finding material relating to Schwenckfeld; the discovery, copying and collecting of a great mass of unpublished material. During all these years Dr. Hartranft has refrained, with fine courage, from dissipating his splendid energies on writing many books, that he might do one great work of permanent value. He has never been in a hurry to publish the result of his investigation, hoping for the discovery of new material. This hope has been rewarded in the course of twenty years by the finding of documents which will throw light upon the course of the Reformation in Germany. This long continued effort to make clear the work of one man in a great movement is an exception to ordinary historical work. There are some few men, like Henry Charles Lea, now unfortunately far past his three-score years and ten, who are willing to give themselves unsparingly to the investigation of one subject, generally a large subject. There are fewer still who are willing or able to give years to the thorough investigation of a seemingly narrow field. We Americans are too anxious to arrive at results quickly. We like to do a piece of work, get through with it and do something else. The recent remark of a noted American is a good illustration of this: "I have written forty-two books and that is forty too many." Any historical work to be of permanent value must be done slowly and carefully, and this is one of the facts that it takes us a long time to learn. The older generation of historians, including Parkman, Prescott and Motley, knew the value of careful, painstaking work and concentration on some one subject, therefore their works abide. The book which is hastily written may serve a temporary purpose, but it soon finds its way to the rubbish heap. There are good reasons why we have so much historical work in America today which bears the marks of haste. The writers are busy men, generally professors in our higher institutions of learning, who are doing as teachers all that could be expected of any men. Literary work must be done in the vacation or the already crowded term time. Historical investigation is delayed and is often poorly done, or not accomplished at all because there is the need of a combination of money, leisure and high scholarship in

order to do any large work thoroughly. There have been a few men who have been able to control this happy combination, but as a rule the scholar is not a man of wealth and rarely one of leisure. There is little general comprehension of the amount of historical work which not only may be done, but imperatively demands attention in order that what we accept as the facts of history may be such in reality. This is especially true of the Reformation period and the centuries immediately preceding it. The only way to obtain permanent results is Dr. Hartranft's careful, scholarly, laborious method, by concentration upon some definite and limited subject.

Again the *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* is a noteworthy production because it gives to us a practical illustration of the meaning of Dr. Hartranft's address when he was inaugurated president of Hartford Theological Seminary, in 1888. At that time he outlined the subject of theological education. He stated that a theological seminary was not simply an educational institution, but that it was equally obligated to engage in research and publication, and that educational effort could reach its highest success only when accompanied by the hunt for truth and the publication of the results of the search. He claimed that in any institution, properly endowed and conducted, these three forms of activity should be carried on all the time. If there is not investigation and publication the old statements are accepted as final and there is no Christian activity and no permanence of Christian work. To accomplish this it is necessary that there be specialization in the work of the institution and leisure for investigation. "The time has gone by when you can expect one man to cover the annals of creation, the annals of paleontology, the annals of anthropology, the annals of mediæval history, the annals of modern history, chronology, geography, statistics, the history of culture, the history of literature, of art, of philosophy and biography, then to add to these as capstones biblical theology, and the history of doctrine, and yet expect him to make researches and also to publish!" His ideals of a seminary are now being in a measure met by Hartford. The institution has assisted in furnishing funds for the research and publication and, more important still, has

granted to Dr. Hartranft the freedom from teaching duties which has made the publication of this first volume possible.

And now someone may ask what is the use of it all? Why spend thousands of dollars and years of labor of able men in adding to the vast mass of Reformation literature? The movement took place centuries ago and thousands of volumes have been written about it. How can there be anything new on an old subject so thoroughly treated? The great mass of literature does not close the subject for two reasons. One is that a large part of what has been published is mere repetition or abridgement of what was previously written by someone else, so that an additional book has rarely brought any new information. It is often only the statement of the old fact in a new way. The second and more important reason is that we have not reached the point where we can see the Reformation as a whole. The history of the protestant Reformation as it comes to us is from the pen of a Lutheran as a rule, and the personal element is shown in the desire to exalt Luther as the national hero of Germany and the founder of the Lutheran Church. The accounts are generally so written that there appears not much beside Luther. Ask the average intelligent man to tell you something about the German Reformation and the chances are that he will begin and end with Luther. There are, of course, reasons for this. Luther was the most prominent figure in the movement and it was moulded largely according to his will. But the Reformation would have come and gone on successfully without any Luther. It would have taken a different form and perhaps a better one without his aid. Another unfortunate result of this position assigned to Luther is the tendency to measure every other German movement by what he did and thought and said. Just as in Geneva Calvin was the norm, and Zwingli in Switzerland. The histories for the most part which deal with the continental Reformation have recognized only four religious classes as entitled to consideration. These were the Romanists, Lutherans, Zwinglians and Calvinists. Any who were outside were not considered worthy of serious consideration and have not received it. They were called indifferently anabaptists, mystics, fanatics. It was enough to condemn a man in the mind of a Lutheran to show that he was

an anabaptist, for was not John of Leyden an anabaptist? and was not the Münster community under the control of the anabaptists? In this way many religious leaders of the Reformation period have been disposed of, and we are now coming to understand that some of these men indiscriminately called mystics and anabaptists were nobler than the leaders of the legally established Church. They approached nearer to the ideal of the New Testament Church than did those who were recognized as leaders in the Reformation. Their ideas could not prevail at the time because they were opposed by the rulers in Church and State. One is astonished at the present time, as we slowly come to a better knowledge of these men, to find how they anticipated the ideals of liberty in government and theology which have only been brought about in recent years and are still unestablished in some lands calling themselves Christian. Many of these anabaptists were men of high education and differed from their contemporaries in that they considered the inner life of more importance than outward form and ceremonies. They were like the early apostles who believed that they ought to obey God rather than man, and when the time came for them to choose between following their conscience or the command of men, they were true to their convictions even if it resulted in exile or death. If we are to have a history of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth as distinguished from the visible, organized Church, we must find our facts in the obscured life of these men. Because they have not been fairly presented we have a one-sided presentation of the Kingdom with emphasis on the ceremony and externals rather than upon the essentials. And this one-sided view is the reason why Church history is often so dull and uninteresting and leads men to say that the Church on a whole has been a failure. It is because the history presents Charlemagne as the Christian emperor telling the Saxons that they must be Christians or die, and does not say anything about Sturm and Ludger and the uncounted host of their fellow missionaries who were living saintly lives amongst the heathen Saxons and by their love for them were winning them to Christ. This one-sided way of writing history may be illustrated by the daily newspaper. The paper prints the news. It tells about the bank cashier who stole the funds in his

keeping and we conclude that the banks are unsafe; but the paper says nothing about the thousands of cashiers who go faithfully on with their business day after day. That is not news. It has been so in the writing of history; the men who have committed the crimes fill a large place in history, while the quietly good are unnoticed.

And it is also true that history is colored by the facts that are selected. An account of the Jesuits may be written in such a way that they will appear as imps of darkness or as angels of light, and in either account the statements made may be literally true. It depends upon the selection of facts. Until very recently events chosen in writing the history of the Reformation have been those which have minimized the value of the independent movements. There has been, however, a decided change in the method of treatment in the last ten years. The history of the visible Church in the Reformation period has been fairly well presented. We are just beginning to understand something of the history of the Kingdom of Heaven in this same time. It can only be written when we have gathered the facts by a careful study of the lives of the leaders. There are many of them, perhaps not so important as Schwenckfeld, but still important, whose lives and works are made known to us mainly by their enemies. They need to be studied as thoroughly and carefully as Dr. Hartranft has studied his subject. It is a cause for profound gratitude that this work has been so well done and that we are to have at last one of the great Christian leaders presented to us in a clear light. We may hope that this is but the beginning and that we shall have in time, presented in the same scholarly way, the records of the other men who have done so much to help us toward the realization of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

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